

**FOCUS GROUP MEETING ON
“HEALTH SERVICES”
2017 BUDGET**

OPENING REMARKS

BY

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DEPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE II**

4 AUGUST 2016

1. A very good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. On behalf of the Ministry of Finance, let me warmly welcome you to the discussion of the Focus Group on Health Services. Thank you for your presence here today.
2. Our Honourable Prime Minister has chaired the 2017 Budget Consultation on 16th June 2016, with the theme “Accelerating Growth, Ensuring Fiscal Prudence, Enhancing Well-being of the Rakyat”. We have since held several focus group discussions to follow up on issues and recommendations highlighted during the Budget Consultation as well as from memorandums submitted by industry groups, professional bodies, researchers, academia and NGOs. The outcomes of these discussions will provide invaluable inputs for crafting the 2017 Budget which is scheduled to be tabled in Parliament on 21st October 2016.
3. We have identified at least 15 topics, covering macroeconomic, sectoral and social issues for this year’s focus group discussions. Today, we will discuss “*Health Services*”.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. As you are well aware, health relates very closely to productivity where healthy people contribute to the economy by being productive while unhealthy people not only affect productivity of themselves and the economy adversely but also implicate a cost either to the person/family themselves, the employer who finance the medical cost or the government that provide the health services. Health is also one of the social indicator used to measure the development of a country. Therefore, Government has given emphasise to health sector and will continue to do so.

5. To date, Malaysia has been considered as one of the most successful healthcare system among developing countries. Our healthcare system has been recognized as one of the best based on the criteria of quality, affordability and accessibility. The life expectancy has increased from 59.5 years in 1960 to 72.5 for males and 77.2 for females in 2014. On top of that, infant mortality has decreased significantly from 84 for every 1,000 live births in 1960 to 7 for every 1,000 live births in 2013 and maternal mortality rate of 0.3 per 1,000 live births.

6. While we acknowledge the concerted efforts as well as the achievement of the Ministry of Health and other agencies in improving health status of Malaysian, we should not be complacent and stop improving. The increasing prevalence of non-communicable disease (NCD) risk factor, the ageing Malaysian population as well as the fiscal constraints faced by the Government pose a new challenge to Ministry of Health as the lead agency to further improve the health status of

Malaysian. We could not deny the fact that each and every individual should take charge and be responsible and accountable of their own health status especially in relation to the non communicable disease, which normally associated with the lifestyle of the individual themselves including their eating habit.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. The Government remains committed to play its role in improving health services and health status of Malaysian. Recognising the importance of maintaining a high level of health status among Malaysian, the commitment should be harmonised with the empowerment of people to be more responsible towards their health status as prevention is better than cure. Not only it is the most effective way of achieving excellent status of health among Malaysian but it is also the most economically efficient way.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. The 2017 Budget is as important as any other budget as it will built up the momentum of the annual progress in order to achieve medium term goals set under the 11th Malaysia Plan, where all macro targets and broad strategies outlined in the Plan will be realised through the annual budgets. Thus, it is part of the critical building block towards achieving an advanced and high income nation by 2020.

9. I am confident that today's discussion will provide us with a useful insights into these pertinent issues. Since the key stakeholders are with us, I look forward to listening to your views on issues as well as ideas on

how to enhance health services and health status of the Malaysian. The diverse member of the meeting is to enable us to discuss the common issues from various perspective and to work hand in hand instead of criticising each other so that the energy and efforts put could be channelled in a more productive manner. Before we start the discussion, I would like to welcome YBhg. Dato' Mohd Shafiq bin Abdullah, Deputy Secretary General of Ministry of Health, to brief us on situational analysis of Malaysia's health care system.

Thank you.